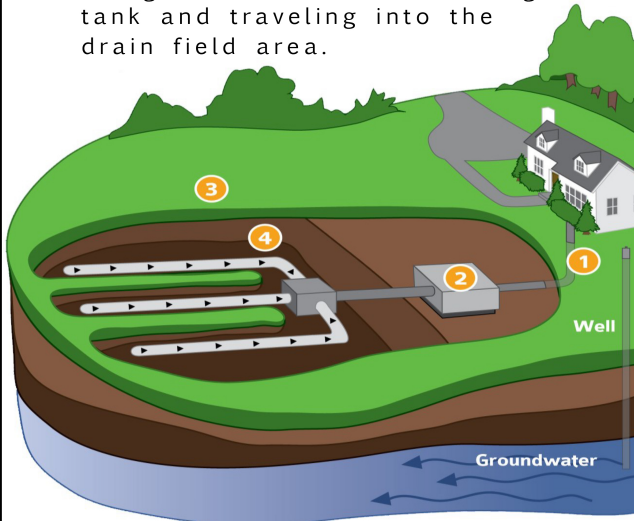


WHY IS SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE SO IMPORTANT?

- **IT SAVES YOU MONEY.** Malfunctioning systems can cost \$3,000 to \$10,000 or more to repair or replace, compared to maintenance costs of \$250 to \$500 every three to five years.
- **IT PROTECTS THE VALUE OF YOUR HOME.** Malfunctioning septic systems can drastically decrease the value of your home, and even pose a legal liability.
- **IT KEEPS OUR WATER CLEAN AND SAFE.** A properly maintained system helps keep local rivers and lakes, including Lake Michigan, clean for your use and enjoyment. If you have a well, it also reduces the risk of drinking contaminated water.
- **IT KEEPS THE ENVIRONMENT CLEAN.** Malfunctioning systems can damage the local ecosystem by harming plants, fish, and shellfish native to Indiana's Lake Michigan watershed.

HOW DOES A SEPTIC SYSTEM WORK?

- 1 All water runs out of your house from one main drainage pipe into a septic tank.
- 2 The septic tank is a buried, water-tight container usually made of concrete, fiberglass, or polyethylene. Its job is to hold the wastewater long enough to allow solids to settle down to the bottom (forming sludge), while the oil and grease floats to the top (as scum). Compartments and a T-shaped outlet prevent the sludge and scum from leaving the tank and traveling into the drain field area.



- 3 The liquid wastewater then exits the tank into the drain field. If the drain field is overloaded with too much liquid, it will flood, causing sewage to flow to the ground surface or create backups in toilets and sinks.
- 4 Finally, the wastewater percolates into the soil, naturally removing harmful bacteria, viruses, and nutrients.

SIMPLE TIPS

- Have your septic tank pumped and inspected by certified, licensed professionals every three to five years.
- Don't pour grease, fats, or harmful chemicals like paints and solvents down your drain. They can clog or otherwise harm your system.
- Don't flush non-degradable items such as diapers, wipes, or feminine hygiene products.
- Don't drive or park on your drain field. Avoid planting trees and shrubs over the drain field.
- Fix household leaks and use water efficiently to avoid overtaxing your system.
- Skip the additives; the only ways to ensure the long-term health of your septic system are periodic pumping and regular maintenance!

PUMPER INFORMATION

Firm/Company: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Certification: _____

HEALTH DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Agency: _____
 Contact: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone: _____

If you have:

- Wastewater backing up into household drains, or ponding in the drain field,
- A strong odor around your septic tank and drain field,
- Bright green, spongy grass appearing on the drain field, even during dry weather,

YOU MIGHT HAVE A FAILING SEPTIC SYSTEM!

Don't wait for a problem to occur.

Contact your local health department with any questions you may have, or for help finding certified and licensed professionals.

